California's Drought Update

Oct 30, 2009

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Introduction

This drought bulletin provides a monthly update to California's water conditions. As we are nearing the beginning of the winter season, reservoir conditions have typically reached their lowest conditions after summer demands. The unseasonably early wet October storms did not significantly reduce our accumulated water supply deficit. Information in this report is based on hydrologic data compiled through either the end of September, or through late October, depending on availability. This month's report includes local drought impacts, a discussion of historical drought periods, impacts by hydrologic region, and the status of drought emergencies declared by counties. Additional drought information can be found on the drought website, http://www.water.ca.gov/drought/.

Hydrologic and Water Supply Conditions

Precipitation

Precipitation in Water Year 2009 was the third consecutive below average year for the state. Water Year 2007-08 resulted in 63 percent of average annual precipitation across the state, and Water Year 2008-09 resulted in 76 percent of average annual precipitation. Table 1 gives the average monthly contribution to statewide precipitation as well as the figures from Water Year 2009. As Table 1 shows, last water year has not been too far below normal, but January, April, July, August, and September were exceptionally dry.

Info source: http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/monitor/calmon/frames_version.html (select region=statewide, element=precipitation, time period=water year Oct-Sept)

What's New

DWR is collaborating with USBR to facilitate 2010 water transfers and respond to water shortages. Water will be transferred using State Water Project (SWP) or Central Valley Project (CVP) facilities to water suppliers that are at risk of experiencing water shortages due to drought conditions and that require supplemental water supplies to meet anticipated demands. A technical paper will be prepared and available in draft in early November to assist buyers and sellers with their water transfer proposals. For further information, please see our water transfers webpage at http://www.water.ca.gov/drought/transfers/.

WY 2009 Oct 1 - Sept 30	Avg CA Precip (inches)	WY 2009 Observed	% of Average
October	1.22	0.73	60%
November	2.80	2.49	89%
December	3.91	3.05	78%
January	4.35	1.25	29%
February	3.66	5.06	138%
March	3.12	2.13	68%
April	1.64	0.59	36%
May	0.89	1.50	169%
June	0.35	0.47	134%
July	0.18	0.03	17%
August	0.28	0.06	21%
September	0.48	0.09	19%
Total	**22.88**	**17.45**	**76%**

Table 1. Average statewide precipitation by month, with current Water Year precipitation through September 30, 2009. Data from California Climate Tracker (Western Region Climate Center) based on National Weather Service Cooperative Observer data.

Reservoir Storage

Statewide reservoir storage at the end of Water Year 2009 was over 17 MAF or about 80 percent of average and 46% of capacity for the date, with individual key reservoirs much lower. Figure 1 shows the condition of the state's larger reservoirs as of October 22, 2009.

Info source: http://cdec4gov.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/products/rescond.pdf or http://cdec4gov.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/reservoirs/RES/

CURRENT RESERVOIR CONDITIONS

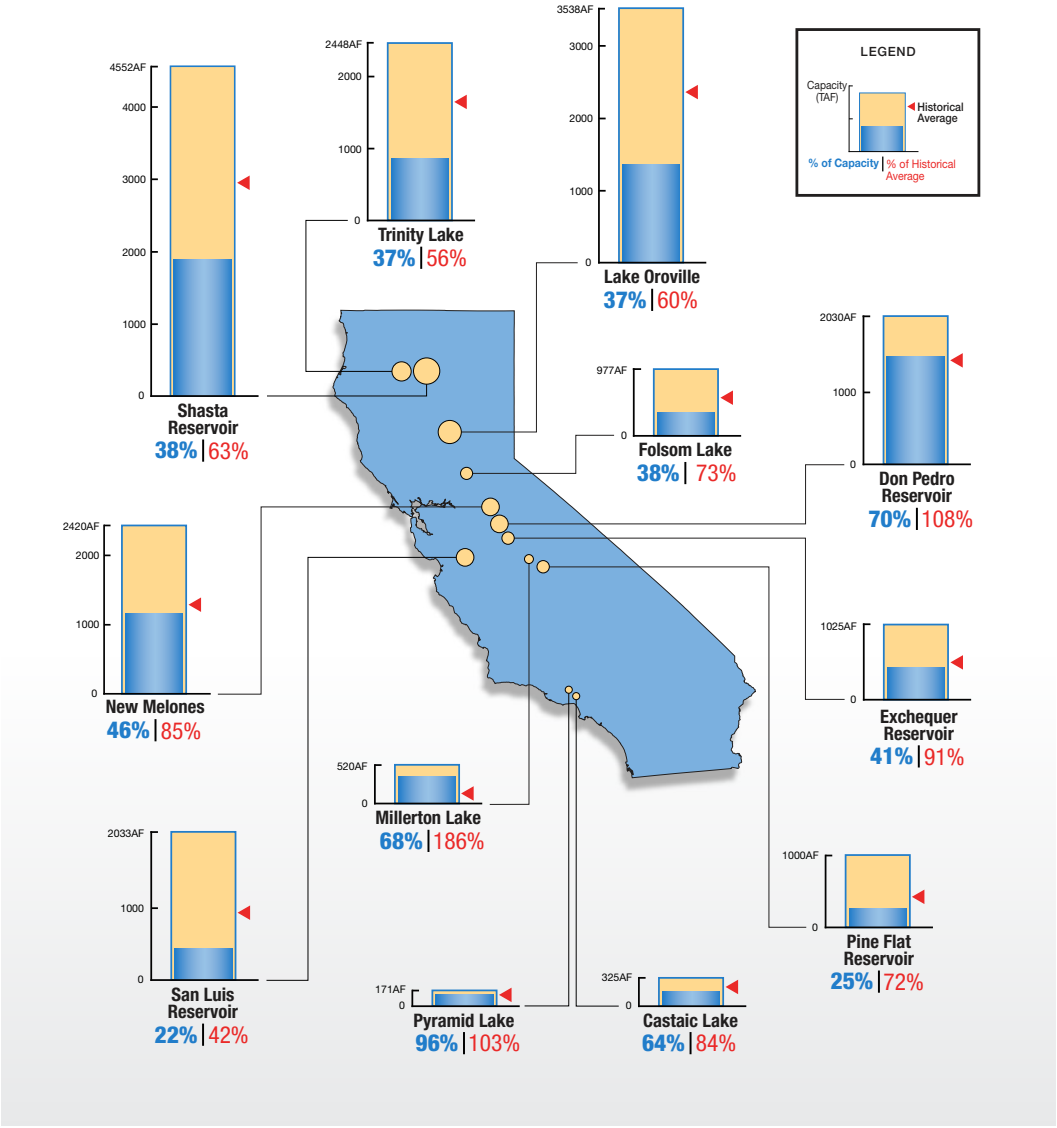

Figure 1. Reservoir storage for select reservoirs shown as percent of capacity (blue) and percent of average (red). The three-year drought, from 2006 to the present, is evident in the well-below normal storage readings. The state will enter the Water Year 2010 with its key supply reservoirs only about half full.

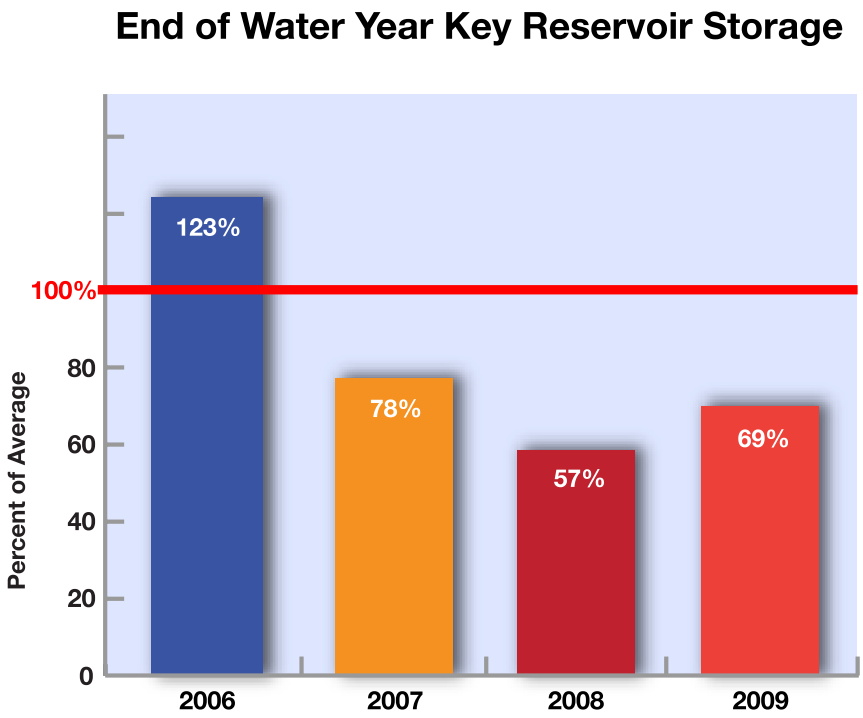

Figure 2. Percent of average end of water year storage for key reservoirs from 2006-2009. ("key reservoirs" comprise Trinity, Shasta, Oroville, Folsom, Don Pedro, New Melones, and San Luis reservoirs)

Figure 2 shows storage for key reservoirs for the end of the last four water years, including the end of this water year on September 30, 2009. The three-year drought, from 2006 to the present, was evident in the well-below normal storage readings. The state will enter the 2009-2010 Water Year with its key supply reservoirs at only 69 percent of average.

Runoff

Figure 3 shows a comparison of statewide runoff from 2006-09. Water Year 2005- 06 was the most recent wet year in California, with 173 percent of average statewide runoff. Water Year 2006-07 was the first of three dry years, ending with 53 percent of average statewide runoff. The Sacramento River region was classified as "Dry," the second driest of five classification levels, and the San Joaquin River region was classified as "Critical," the driest level. Water Year 2007-08 ended with 60 percent of average statewide runoff, and both the Sacramento and San Joaquin River regions classified as "Critical." Water Year 2008-09 ended with 65 percent of average statewide runoff, and the Sacramento and San Joaquin river regions being classified as "Dry" and "Below Normal", respectively.

Info source: (http://cdec4gov.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/rpts1/FLOWOUT/)

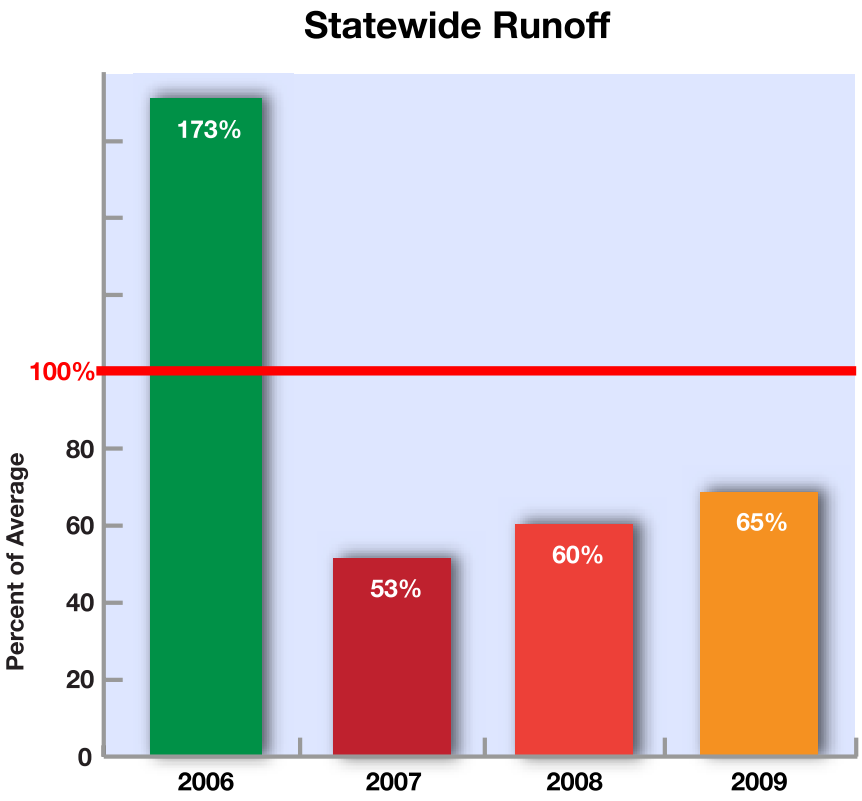

Figure 3. Statewide runoff for water years 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

	Sacramento River			San Joaquin River		
WY	Runoff MAF	Index	Year Type	Runoff MAF	Index	Year Type
2006	32.09	13.2	W	10.44	5.9	W
2007	10.28	6.2	D	2.51	2.0	C
2008	10.28	5.1	C	3.50	2.1	C
2009	12.91	5.7	D	4.97	2.7	BN

Table 2. Sacramento and San Joaquin river runoff, WSI, and year type for select water years (W=wet, D=dry, C=critical, BN=below normal)

The Sacramento River annual water year runoff averages 18.62 MAF using a 50 year averaging period from 1956 to 2005. This corresponds to an average water supply index (WSI) of 8.33. The average yearly runoff and WSI from the San Joaquin River is 5.96 MAF and 3.29. Table 2 shows the Sacramento and San Joaquin river runoff, WSI, and year type for select water years. Figures 4 and 5 compare historic inter-annual drought periods using the Sacramento Basin Water Supply Index and the San Joaquin Basin Water Supply Index.

Info Source: (http://cdec4gov.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/iodir/wsihist and http://cdec4gov.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/iodir/b120 for WY2009/)

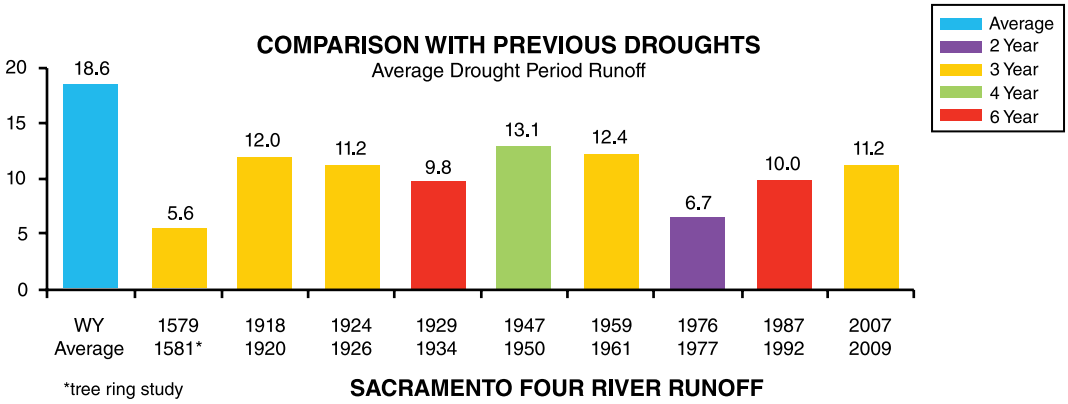

Figure 4. Historic inter-annual drought periods using the Sacramento Basin Water Supply Index for runoff from four rivers: Sacramento, Feather, Yuba, and American.

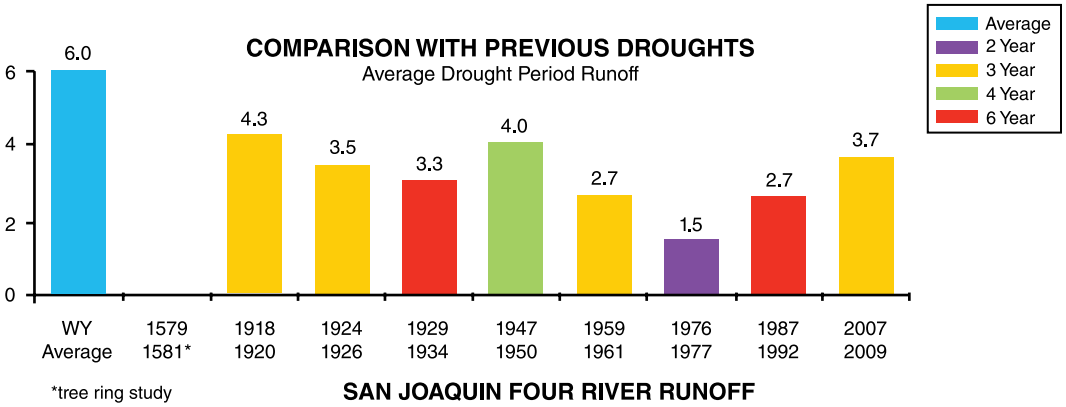

Figure 5. Historic inter-annual drought periods using the San Joaquin Basin Water Supply Index for runoff from four rivers: Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Merced, and San Joaquin.

Meteorology

As of September 30, 2009, at the end of Water Year 2009, statewide hydrologic conditions from the State Meteorologist were as follows: precipitation, 80 percent of average to date; runoff, 65 percent of average to date; and reservoir storage, 80 percent of average for the date. Sacramento River unimpaired runoff observed through September 30, 2009 was about 12.9 million acre-feet (MAF), which is about 70 percent of average. Last year, on September 30, 2008, the observed Sacramento River unimpaired runoff through that date was about 10.3 MAF, or about 55 percent of average.

As of September 30, the Northern Sierra 8-Station Precipitation Index Water Year total was 46.7 inches, 93 percent of an average water year (50 inches). Last year on September 30 (the end of Water Year 2008), the seasonal total to date was 34.9 inches, 70 percent of an average water year. Water Years 2007–2009 were the 13th driest consecutive 3-year period (tied with Water Years 1976-1978) out of 87 years of record.

The latest National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center (CPC) weather outlook for November, 2009, issued October 15, 2009, forecasts average precipitation for all of California. The CPC's, Winter Outlook, also issued October 15, forecasts slightly above average precipitation for all of California.

Climatology

Water year 2009 ended with slightly below normal conditions in terms of precipitation and well below average runoff. Statewide, precipitation was 76% of average. The northern California 8-station index fared better recording 93% of average conditions. Statewide runoff was only 65% of average, while the Sacramento River's 12.9 million acre feet of runoff was about 70% of average. The Sacramento Runoff Index was classified as Dry, and the San Joaquin River Runoff Index was classified as below normal. Only three times last century did northern California droughts extend beyond three years.

Groundwater Basin Conditions

Figure 6 shows wells in the Central Valley displayed as colored dots and triangles. The blue triangles indicate a well that was used to generate the plots on a hydrograph. A hydrograph is a plot of repeated groundwater level measurements over time from one or more wells. Each hydrograph shows the measured depth to groundwater below ground surface from 1970 to Fall 2009 for selected wells (subject to data availability). Comparing hydrographs shows that groundwater levels vary from region to region, and within a region. Other wells, indicated with a colored dot, were selected to compare groundwater levels during Spring 2009 with groundwater levels during Spring in previous droughts. For additional information, refer to the DWR Drought Current Conditions Groundwater website (http://www.water.ca.gov/drought/docs/DROUGHT_DOT_MAP_web_layout_spring2009_v3-1_wExplanation.pdf) and the DWR Water Data Library (http://www.water.ca.gov/waterdatalibrary/).

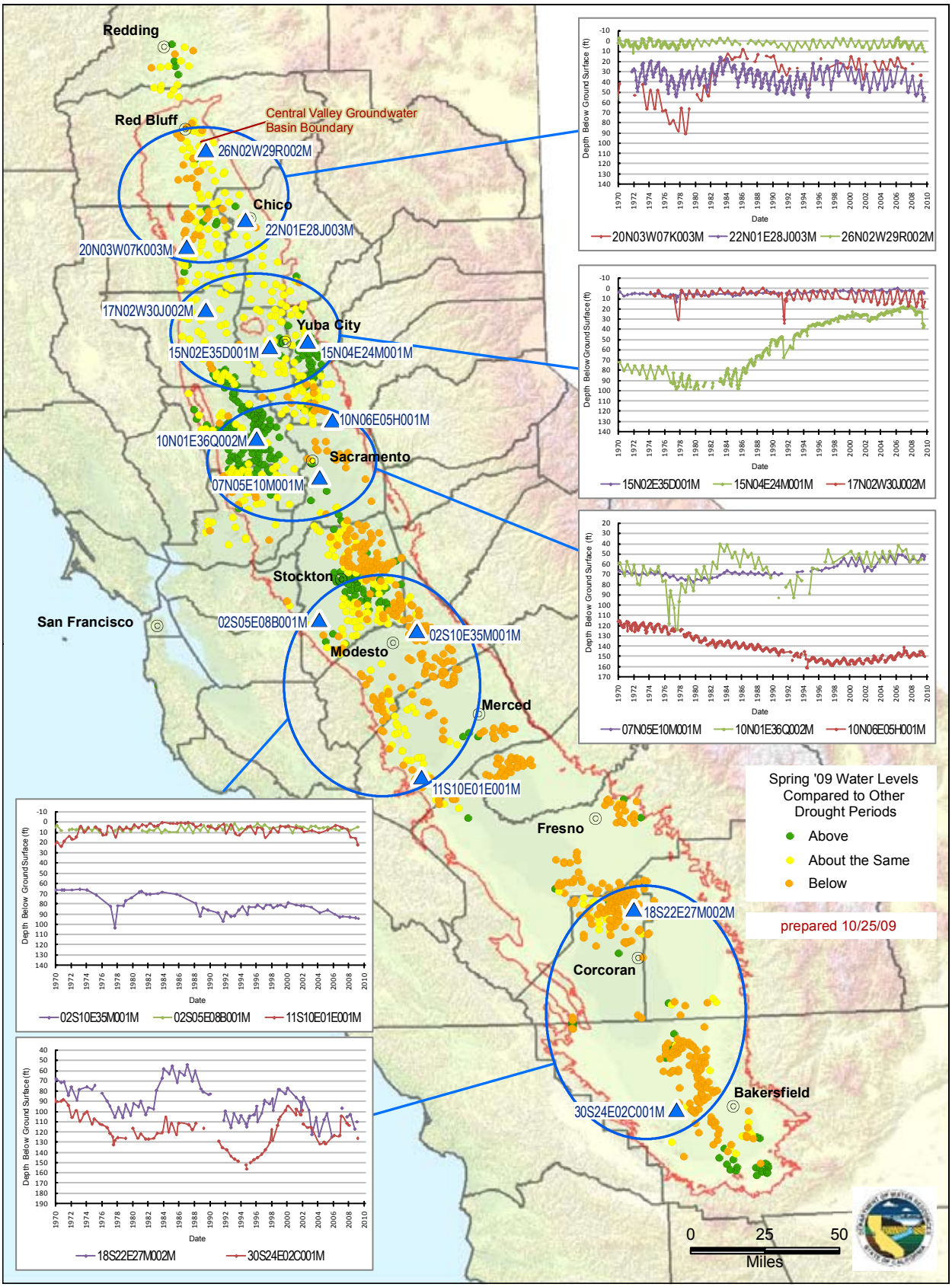

Figure 6. Groundwater Level Comparison in Selected Central Valley Water Wells

Local Impacts and Responses to the Drought

Throughout the year counties requesting US Department of Agriculture (USDA) drought designations send their requests to the California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA). Each request contains an estimate of dollar losses due to the drought or water shortages for at least one of the county's effected crops. Table 3, which contains information provided by CalEMA, indicates the status of USDA drought designations by county.

As of October 27, 2009, the USDA had granted agricultural disaster designations, either primary, contiguous, or both due to drought, for 50 of California's 58 counties. So far 25 California counties have requested primary designations and provided the California Emergency Management Agency with estimates of the dollar value of their drought-related losses for one or more crops for various reporting periods. The total loss for all the reporting counties is about $876.0 million. Table 3 is not an inclusive accounting of all drought losses and many of the reporting periods span more than 12 months.

North Coast Hydrologic Region---Mendocino County Water Agency (MCWA) reported that the recent heavy rains had little immediate impact on stream flow. Despite the lack of runoff from the storm, Lake Mendocino storage at this point in time is much greater than anticipated for this date, although not quite up to historical averages. It is at its highest level for this date since 2005 and the fifth highest for this date in the last 10 years. Due to Lake Mendocino storage remaining higher than anticipated during the summer and fall months, MCWA did not submit a Drought Action Plan to CalEMA.

In Sonoma County, the Town of Windsor has ended restrictions on water use. However, measures might be re-imposed if water conditions change. In Santa Rosa, on September 29, 2009, the city council declared an end to the water shortage emergency and rescinded Stage 1 of their emergency response, effective October 3,2009.

North Lahontan Hydrologic Region---The Truckee River Water master projects that Lake Tahoe's water level will drop to near its natural rim (elevation 6223 feet) by this December. The water surface elevation as of October 22, 2009 was 6223.08. When the lake level drops below the natural rim, no releases can be made to the reach of the Truckee River immediately downstream of Lake Tahoe. Once the flow from the lake increases, the gates of Tahoe Dam generally remain open until the natural flow exceeds requirements. The flows can then be regulated using the gates and storage of water may begin within Lake Tahoe. The Dam can impound 6 additional feet of water over the 192 square miles of Lake Tahoe.

Sacramento River Hydrologic Region---As reported in the September drought bulletin, in southern Sacramento Valley, the height of the irrigation season is over. In many areas groundwater levels in wells are beginning to rebound due to decreased

2009 USDA Disaster Declaration Requests & Designations						
Based on information provided to DWR by CalEMA, 10/27/09						
County	Incident Type	Incident Period	Comments	Reported Loss	USDA Approved Primary	USDA Approved Contiguous
Alameda	Drought	10/1/08 to present	Rangeland, hay. Also reporting $900k in cattle/sheep losses	$3,539,142	9/17/09	
Alpine	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Amador	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Butte	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Calaveras	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Colusa	Drought	12/08 - 05/09	Rangeland	$760,000	9/17/09	
Contra Costa	Drought	10/1/08 to present	Rangeland/pasture	$4,010,171	9/17/09	
Fresno	Drought	6/6/08 and continuing	Rangeland fodder; reduced plantings of broccoli, corn, cotton, lettuce, tomato, cantaloupe, alfalfa, carrots, garlic, onion, & sudan grass. Contiguous to Madera.	$168,933,905	6/26/09	
Glenn	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Humboldt	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Imperial	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Inyo	Drought	10/08 and continuing	Irrigated pasture and dry grazing. *Contiguous to the State of Nevada, Fresno, and Madera.*	$1,884,000	9/17/09	6/26/09
Kern	Drought	7/08-6/09	Rangeland & other crops.	$566,700,000	9/17/09	
Kings	Drought	10/07 and continuing	Rangeland, Alfalfa, Corn-Silage, Cotton, Tomatoes-Proc., Wheat. *Contiguous to Fresno & Madera.*	$58,475,195	9/17/09	6/26/09
Lake	Drought	11/08 - 05/09	Hay, rangeland	$282,720	9/17/09	
Lassen	Drought	1/1/09 and continuing	Pasture irrigated, non-irrigated pasture, rangeland, grain, hay	$10,920,467		
Los Angeles	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Madera	Drought	6/6/08 and continuing	Rangeland forage	$2,012,100	6/26/09	
Marin	Drought	7/1/08 and continuing	Rangelands, un-irrigated pastures, silage and hay	$2,107,286	9/17/09	
Mariposa	Drought	1/1/09 and continuing	*Contiguous to Fresno and Madera. * * Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation*	$3,051,000	9/17/09	6/26/09
Mendocino	Drought	2/26/08 and continuing	Pasture, hay, rangeland	$3,388,805	9/17/09	
Merced	Drought	4/1/08 and continuing	Rangeland; *Contiguous to Fresno & Madera. ** Cont. county-9/17/09 USDA Desig.*	$7,838,061	9/17/09	6/26/09
Mono	Drought	10/08 and continuing	Irrigated pasture & dry grazing. *Contiguous to Fresno & Madera. *Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation*	$2,696,000	9/17/09	6/26/09
Monterey	Drought		*Contiguous to Fresno and Madera.*			9/17/09
Napa	Drought		*Contiguous to 21 Counties that rec'd USDA Desig. on 9/17/09			9/17/09
Orange	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09

Table 3. USDA Disaster Declaration Requests and Designations

2009 USDA Disaster Declaration Requests & Designations

Based on information provided to DWR by CalEMA, 10/27/09

County	Incident Type	Incident Period	Comments	Reported Loss	USDA Approved Primary	USDA Approved Contiguous
Placer	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Plumas	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Riverside	Drought	July 1, 2008 & cont.	Wheat, Oat, Barley	$5,084,505	9/17/09	
Sacramento	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
San Benito	Drought	July 2008 - June 2009	Rangeland losses. *Contiguous to Fresno and Madera.*	$5,948,160	9/17/09	6/26/09
San Bernardino	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
San Diego	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
San Joaquin	Drought	Spring 2009 and con't	*Rangeland*	$1,800,000	9/17/09	
San Luis Obispo	Drought	October 2008 - con't	Rangeland	$7,576,800	9/17/09	
San Mateo	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Santa Barbara	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Santa Clara	Drought	1/1/09 and continuing	Rangeland	$651,272	9/17/09	
Santa Cruz	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Shasta	Drought	1/1/09 and continuing	Range & improved pasture. Contig. County - 9/17/09 USDA Desig.	$390,812		9/17/09
Solano	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Sonoma	Drought	Spring 2008 - May 2009	*Rangeland/Grassland, Silage, Hay-Oat, Grant-Oat*	$2,989,841	9/17/09	
Stanislaus	Drought	10/1/08 and continuing	*Rangeland*	$8,985,243	9/17/09	
Sutter	Drought	5/08 - 4/09	*Rangeland*	$283,401	9/17/09	
Tehama	Drought	7/1/08 and con't	*Rangeland*	$5,728,800	9/17/09	
Trinity	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Tulare	Drought		*Contiguous to Fresno & Madera. *Cont. county-9/17/09 USDA Desig.*			9/17/09
Tuolumne	Drought		*Contiguous to Fresno & Madera. *Cont. county-9/17/09 USDA Desig.*			9/17/09
Ventura	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Yolo	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Yuba	Drought		* Contiguous county-9/17/09 USDA Designation			9/17/09
Drought Subtotal		**25**		**$ 876,037,686**	**23**	**33****

Total count identified under Incident Period (25) represents total requests by counties for primary declarations.
Only Lassen County has reported a loss, requested an ag. disaster designation, and not been granted one.

These 8 counties have not been declared agri. disaster areas due to drought: Del Norte, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Sierra, San Francisco & Siskiyou. 50 counties have been designated by the USDA as ag. disaster areas due to drought in 2009.

* 21 counties received a USDA Designation on 9/17/09: Alameda, Colusa, Contra Costa, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Mono, Riverside, San Benito, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Clara, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama.

**Six California counties have received such designations on both a primary and contiguous basis.

Note that some counties' reported losses are for multi-year periods. Some counties only report losses which had occurred by the report date, while others include losses forecasted to occur later in the year. Many counties have not reported their losses.

groundwater pumping, while in some wells water levels are unchanged or lower than in August. In northern Sacramento Valley, DWR's Northern Regional Office is collecting its semi-annual groundwater level measurements.

Sacramento Regional Water Authority earlier reported improvement in the drought status for some area agencies due to increased allocation from the USBR, but conditions continue to vary. Many of the cities are continuing on drought alert, but the City of Roseville has ended its stage 2 water conservation level.

Yolo County is concerned about having another dry year as they have little to no reservoir carryover storage which has been exhausted by the previous low years. The Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District started the 2009 irrigation season with 17% of capacity in Clear Lake and 11% of capacity in Indian Valley Reservoir. Therefore they had a very short season, delivering about 10% of the normal amount of water. The season ended the first week of August.

Bay Area Hydrologic Region---As reported in the September drought bulletin, Bay Area water agencies are continuing mandatory and voluntary water conservation measures. With late spring rains, increased allocations for South Bay Aqueduct contractors, increased reliance on groundwater pumping, and effective conservation, the need for increased conservation and mandatory measures has subsided.

Tulare Lake and San Joaquin River Hydrologic Regions---Local agencies report that groundwater levels continue to decline. New well construction and deepening of wells continues; however new agricultural well construction exceeds that of domestic well construction. It is significant that new well construction is now being conducted in areas previously thought of as unsuitable for water extraction due to marginal water quality.

In Kern County, as groundwater levels continue to decline, groundwater is being pumped from lower levels of the basin's aquifers; in some cases, the lower levels of the aquifers contain higher concentrations of arsenic, which effects water quality. Over the summer, some landowners in the mountain and desert areas of Kern County have had groundwater levels drop below the reach of their wells but the current cost of deepening or reconstruction of these wells is prohibitively high with some relying on adjacent wells for their water supply. There has been a marked decrease in agricultural double-cropping due to reduced water supply. Agricultural drainage issues on the west side of Kern County have diminished somewhat due to lower groundwater levels and increased water use efficiency.

In the Kings River basin area, there has been an increase in crop changes during the current drought, such as switching from row crops to vines or orchards; these changes necessitate changes in irrigation systems as well, such as going from flood to drip application in order to maximize water use efficiency. The reduction in surface water from the Kings River has been offset by groundwater extraction, which has led to record lows in groundwater levels. Next month, the Kings River Resource Conservation District will begin a ground-level subsidence monitoring program along the western side of the basin. One impact of the drought in this area is an

increased awareness of, and need for, the implementation of groundwater recharge projects.

In the fractured bedrock aquifers of the South Sierra foothill and mountain region of Madera, Fresno, and Tulare counties, groundwater levels continue to steadily decrease, with some well water levels having dropped by approximately 50 feet over the summer.

Central Coast Hydrologic Region--- The mid-October storm delivered significant amounts of rain water to the Central Coast, filling reservoirs and river channels. However, in response to continued below-normal precipitation associated with the current drought, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency has proposed a cloud seeding project using silver iodide to enhance precipitation. The project is currently undergoing public comment and review until November 18, 2009.

Below-normal precipitation during the current drought has led to a decrease in surface water supplies, forcing water users to rely more heavily on groundwater. However, a concern is that increased groundwater pumping would cause seawater intrusion into coastal aquifers and contaminate freshwater.

South Coast, South Lahontan, and Colorado River Hydrologic Regions ---As drought conditions persist and water rates climb in the southern hydrologic regions, water agencies and their customers are starting to explore more ways to conserve water. With much of the indoor conservation measures (e.g. low flow fixtures and appliances) already being implemented, there is now a strong trend to curb the water use on outdoor landscaping. Many agencies are encouraging their customers to install water efficient sprinkler systems and native, drought tolerant landscaping: the Municipal Water District of Orange County offers free Water-Wise Landscape Workshops to help educate its customers; Western Municipal Water District hosts a Waterwise Gardening Guide on its website to offer suggestions for water efficient landscaping; Metropolitan Water District operates its website, http://www.bewaterwise.com/ where customers can access a watering calculator to determine the correct amount of water to give their landscape every week; and San Diego Water Authority published a list of 50 plants, titled *Nifty 50* that are drought tolerant, non-invasive and are readily available at local nurseries. Many other water agencies in the region are realizing the water saving benefits of drought tolerant landscaping, and encouraging their use through similar outreach efforts.

According to the Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRDSC), because the City of Long Beach has had an effective drought water conservation program in place, 3,000 AF of imported water from the Metropolitan Water District is available and has been purchased for groundwater replenishment of the Central Basin in Los Angeles County. The water will be infiltrated into the basin at the Rio Hondo spreading grounds over the next few weeks. The WRDSC previously reported that because there has been no replenishment water since May 2007, groundwater levels in the Montebello Forebay which is located in the northern portion of the Central Basin where most recharge occurs, have declined to their 1977-78 elevation.

Water Conservation Actions by Local Water Agencies

As of October 25, 2009, there are 67 local water agencies in California that have mandated water conservation and 56 water agencies urging voluntary conservation measures. A current update of the number of agencies mandating conservation and urging voluntary conservation measures can be found at the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) website, http://www.acwa.com/issues/cadrought/.

Fresno County Drought Emergency Proclamation

The Governor's authorization for drought disaster food distributions to Fresno County expires on October 31st. County representatives have informally approached the Department of Social Services (DSS) to request continued funding for food distributions. DSS is presenting the request to the California Health and Human Services Agency for consideration.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has denied the Governor's appeal for a major disaster declaration for the State of California due to severe drought conditions. The specific request was a declaration for unemployment assistance, food commodities, crisis counseling assistance, and training and legal services for Fresno County and hazard mitigation statewide.

Mendocino County Drought Emergency Declaration

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors met on September 22, 2009 and adopted a resolution extending, for an additional 14 days, the state of emergency and imminent threat of disaster in Mendocino County due to drought conditions. The original resolution was passed on March 14, 2009 declaring a local emergency due to drought conditions. A new resolution on April 7, 2009 amended and extended the original resolution and requested technical and financial assistance, equipment, and regulatory relief from the State to mitigate drought impacts. The resolution also requested a federal declaration of emergency and federal assistance. On October 27, 2009 the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors will hold a "Drought Workshop" to review the current situation and possibly suspend the County's Emergency Drought Ordinance, with the stipulation that the situation be reassessed in mid-December and January.

Humboldt County Drought Emergency Declaration

The Redway Community Services District (RCSD) is currently relying on mandatory water conservation and a temporary pump installed in the South Fork Eel River to meet current demands while it seeks funding and approvals for improvements to their system. RCSD is awaiting approval of an Army Corps of Engineers 1602 permit. The permit requires consultation from the National Marine Fisheries Service. Funding for improvements to their system is expected to be granted upon approval of the final design and specifications by California Department of Public Health.

Kings County Drought Emergency Declaration

As reported in the September drought bulletin, the Kings County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 07-048 on June 19, 2007 declaring a local emergency on the basis of drought conditions. The Resolution has been renewed thereafter bi-weekly. The Resolution notes the lowering of water tables in irrigation wells throughout the region and estimates of crop losses due to the drought. The Resolution authorizes the County Emergency Services Officer to consult and cooperate with Federal and State Officials about mitigating the conditions caused by the drought.

Planning for a Dry 2010

DWR continues to work on actions to prepare for the possibility California's drought continuing into 2010 and beyond. These include increased water conservation, a 2010 drought water bank, a long-term water transfer program, improvements to the California Irrigation Management Information System, and meeting with Ca1EMA and other state and local agencies to coordinate emergency response activities.

A public meeting to discuss water transfer issues and proposed strategy for 2010 was held on October 8, 2009. Comments on the 2010 strategy were invited for consideration. A technical paper will be prepared and available in draft in early November to assist buyers and sellers with their water transfer proposals. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has hired a consultant to provide assistance with the water transfer program. More information can be found on the DWR drought website, http://water.ca.gov/drought/transfers/.

The second annual Winter Outlook Workshop will be held on Tuesday November 3rd in San Diego and will be webcast. Various experts will present the latest information and forecasting for the 2009/10 winter season. More information and the web link can be found on the DWR website, http://www.water.ca.gov/news/.

For more information on Planning for a Dry 2010, see our DWR link on Drought Planning and Preparedness at http://water.ca.gov/drought/planning.cfm/.

Drought Contingency Plan

DWR's California Water Plan staff and State Agency steering committee are working on a draft of a 5-year Statewide Drought Contingency Plan. The drought contingency plan was presented at the California Water Plan Plenary meeting on October 14. The purpose of the plan is to articulate a coordinated State government strategy for preparing for, responding to, and recovering from drought. An annotated outline was provided for public input. A draft plan will be completed by end of November, and a final plan will be released in conjunction with the next water plan update due in February 2010.

Summary

The current drought period beginning in 2007, has left a significant deficit in our reservoir's carry-over supplies. Based on storage for key reservoirs at the end of the last three water years, the state entered the 2009-2010 Water Year, beginning October 1, with its key supply reservoirs at only 69 percent of average and 42 percent of capacity. Water Year 2008-09 ended with 65 percent of average statewide runoff, with the Sacramento region Water Supply Index (WSI) classified as "Dry" and San Joaquin River region WSI classified as "Below Normal". While the recent cumulative water supply deficits from below average rainfall and runoff are not as deep as some past severe droughts, California's upcoming winter season is uncertain, so the State continues to prepare for the possibility of a dry 2010.